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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 PM-05 NSC-10 SS-20 RSC-01 L-04 H-02 O-03 SY-03
AID-28 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 P-03 USIA-12
PRS-01 USSS-00 RSR-01 /121 W
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R 042215Z AUG 70
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8030
INFO AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/GIC/IR
REVIEWED BY [illegible] 7 4 2003

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CINCSO FOR POLAD

SUBJ: MITRIONE KIDNAPPING - PRESS INTERVIEW WITH AP

1. I HELD A FORTY MINUTE OFF THE RECORD PRESS BRIEFING WITH BUENOS AIRES BASED AP CORRESPONDENT LOUIS UCHITELLE THIS AFTERNOON AT 1500.

2. HE OPENED BY SAYING THAT HE ASSUMED THAT I PROBABLY KNEW AS MUCH AS ANYONE WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE GOU REGARDING THE MITRIONE SEARCH. I RESPONDED THAT OF COURSE I WAS IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH GOU OFFICIALS BUT THAT I WASN'T SURE THAT I KNEW EVERYTHING. I SAID I KNEW THE GOU WAS ANXIOUS TO SEE MITRIONE FREED AND I BELIEVED THAT IT (GOU) WAS VERY ACTIVE IN THIS PURSUIT.

3. HE STATED THAT ONE IMMEDIATE REACTION WHEN MITRIONE WAS TAKEN WAS THAT HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE CIA AND WANTED TO KNOW IF THIS WERE TRUE. IF NOT, HE INQUIRED AS TO THE TRUE NATURE OF MITRIONE'S DUTIES AS PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISOR. I REPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT AN AGENT OF THE CIA BUT THAT HE WAS A PROFESSIONAL POLICEMAN WHO HAD DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO THE PROMOTION AND

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DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SECURITY AND THAT HE WAS BROUGHT TO URUGUAY TO ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY SKILLS HERE.

4. UCHITELLE THEN ASKED IF MITRIONE HAD ANYTHING TO DO DIRECTLY WITH ANTI-GUERRILLA TRAINING. I REPLIED THAT POLICE WORK COVERED A BROAD FIELD BUT MITRIONE WAS NOT SENT HERE FOR ANY POLICE SPECIALITY BUT RATHER AS A TECHNICAL ADVISER ON POLICE WORK IN GENERAL.

5. HE ASKED WHETHER THE USG WAS APPLYING ANY PRESSURE ON THE GOU IN THE KIDNAP PROBLEM. MY REPLY WAS THAT WE ARE IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH THE GOU AND HAVE CLEARLY AND FORTHRIGHTLY EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN FOR MITRIONE'S SAFETY. HOWEVER, I TOLD HIM THAT THE WORK "PRESSURE" LENT ITSELF TO TOO MANY INVALID INTERPRETATIONS AND THEREFORE ONE SHOULD NOT USE IT.

6. HE TOLD ME THAT ASSOCIATED PRESS HAD STUDIED THE STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF INTERIOR FRANCESE AND HAD CONCLUDED THAT IT SAID NEITHER YES NOR NO AND WANTED BY OPINIONS. I SAID THAT I WAS IN ESSENTIAL AGREEMENT WITH HIS INTERPRETATION AND DID NOT THINK THE DOORS WERE CLOSED.

7. HE WANTED TO KNOW HOW I VIEWED THE TUPAMAROS AS AN ORGANIZATION SAYING THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THEY WERE VERY LOOSELY KNIT AND MADE UP OF MANY DIFFERENT IDIOLOGIES. I REPLIED THAT I THOUGHT THEY MIGHT BE MADE UP OF A NUMBER OF PARTS BUT HAD INDICATED ENOUGH CENTRAL CONTROL TO BE EFFECTIVE.

8. HE DISCUSSED THE DIFFICULT POSITION AN EXCHANGE WOULD HAVE ON THE GOU AND THE TROUBLE IT COULD CAUSE THE USG AND BEGAN TO POSE HYPOTHETICAL SITUATIONS ABOUT WHICH HE ASKED ME TO COMMENT. I AGREED THERE WERE MANY DIFFICULTIES BUT REMARKED. THAT SPECULATION ON HYPOTHETICAL CASES ONLY LEADS TO MORE SPECULATION AND CONFUSION AND DECLINED TO COMMENT FURTHER.

9. HE URGED ME TO PERMIT HIM TO INTERVIEW GORDON JONES AND/OR NATHAN ROSENFELD. I DECLINED, EXPLAINING TO HIM THAT I DID NOT WANT ANYTHING PUBLISHED EITHER IN THE US OR URUGUAY THAT COULD IN ANY REMOTE WAY PREJUDICE MITRIONE'S CURRENT SITUATION OR THE JONES FAMILY SAFETY. EARLIER IN THE INTERVIEW I HAD EXPRESSED THE SAME AS MY REASON FOR HAVING RELATIVELY LITTLE

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CONTACT WITH THE PRESS.

10. HIS FINAL QUESTION DEALT WITH ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES TAKEN BY THE EMBASSY FOR US PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY AND THE ARRIVAL OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS "TO WORK ON THE CASE." I REPLIED, AS YESTERDAY, THAT WE HAD TAKEN MEASURES FOR SUCH SECURITY LONG BEFORE THE KIDNAPPING BUT THAT WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE. I DID NOT SAY WHAT THE MEASURES WERE. AS REGARDS THE ARRIVAL OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL, I MERELY STATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NEW ARRIVALS BUT THEY WERE JUST "TO FILL EMPTY SLOTS." ADAIR

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